1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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of pigs naturally depends on the age and quality of the animal, but 70 dollars Nickel, or fifteen shillings, is the usual price of a fat pig ready for slaughter. Pig bristles, which are one of the few local products which have a world market, fetch ten dollars Silver a catty, or about nine shillings for one and a quarter pounds weight. This is in Ta Li a high price, but it must be remembered that only the bristles along the spinal ridge of the pig are of any use, and the quantity obtained from one animal is not very large. Sheep, which, as has been pointed out, are not greatly valued or numerous, fetch about twenty dollars Nickel a head at most, as compared with seventy to eighty for a fat pig. Cattle, either for milking or draught, are a little more expensive, the prices ranging between twenty and thirty dollars Silver a head, or about fifteen shillings to one pound sterling. The price of a horse or mule varies a great deal, as there is a wide difference between the value of a pack pony and a good riding horse. Fifty dollars Silver, or about two pounds, is the lowest price, but a good mount may cost four times as much, and big, powerful mules bred on the Tibetan border, which can carry loads of two hundred catties (two hundred and fifty pounds), were selling for as much as four hundred dollars Silver or nearly £16 0s. 0d. a head. It is true that this high price was paid by army buyers at the autumn fair in 1938, and is not normal.

Although the character of this market remains much the same throughout the year there are seasonal changes. Thus in the beginning of autumn large numbers of quilts and warm coats are offered for sale, and in the summer umbrellas, "rain cloth"—a kind of local oil cloth—and palm fibre rain cloaks worn by the farmers, are in great demand, for the Min Chia, like the Chinese, hate getting wet. Towards the end of the lunar year, when the great New Year settling day is approaching, the market becomes very busy,

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342 front wall. A large part of the yard is set off by a low wall and serves
[343] as a cattle pen. Opposite this on the narrow side is a stall for horses and yaks, formed merely by a roof about 2 meters wide and open toward the yard. The house itself consists of two rooms about two meters high with simple mud walls and a Tibetan-style flat roof formed of horizontal wooden beams laid side by side, with layers of earth spread over them. The two rooms are furnished with simple k'angs which are heated from the outside, as in China. Almost all these winter houses look very dilapidated. Next to the winter houses one sometimes sees large stacks of dried yak dung, resembling our haystacks.
[372] [237]

Work of the Men and Women

512 The daily schedule and the work of the tent nomads is very simple. They sleep surprisingly little. They get up at the first hint of dawn and do not go to bed until two or three hours after dark. They only occasionally take a nap in the middle of the day. As soon as they get up, they milk their animals and drive them out to pasture.

462 The men work very little. Their favorite occupation is riding in company and paying calls, during which the main topic of conversation is pasture conditions and choice of pasture sites. When it grows dark they chat and drink tea. Oddly enough, the men make
[294] their own clothes.

462 For the rest, practically all the work falls on the women. They
234 must milk, make butter and dried curds. Cooking, however, takes little time, in view of the simplicity of the Tibetan diet.

283 The women also spin. The fleece is first /23/ washed in cold
467 water, wrung out and then dried on the meadow. In spinning they
286 wind the wool on a short wooden stick and, with a simple hand spindle consisting of a weighted wooden stick, they spin off a coarse yarn. The wool which the women spin they take to the sedentary Fantzu women who can weave a cloth used in making tsamba bags. The nomad women buy back this cloth with money, butter or wool. The cloth for their woolen coats and pelerines they have woven by
[435] Chinese in Ho-chou. The Chinese weaver gets one cent for a foot of material. The nomad women themselves know how to weave only the coarse yak hair cloth from which tents are made. The men and women also twist coarse ropes of yak hair which they use to stretch the tent material, for bridles and for tying up their horses. Other feminine handiwork, such as knitting and embroidering, is not done by the nomad women.

372 Gathering fuel is one of the important occupations of the women.
237 They must collect yak and sheep dung, dry it and stack it properly.

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236 [476] The sheep are sheared once a year in May or June. Neighbors help each other in this task without charge. It takes an average of two days to shear the herd of one family. A wether gives 1 chin of wool annually, a ewe, 1/2 chin. A chin of fleece costs 20 to 50 cents. At the time of my visit the demand for wool was so great that the highest price was paid. A sheepskin costs $0.60 to $1. 237 435 However, skins of unborn lambs cost $2 to $4. A sheep gut is sold for $0.20 to $0.30; in He-tso, the nearest large town, the price goes 262 up to $0.40 when it is resold. More mutton than yak meat is eaten. Lambs are eaten only if they have died of some disease. The Fantzu do not drink sheep milk, but they use it for butter if they do not have enough yak milk.

231 /28/ The sheep often suffer from paralysis of both forelegs, and many die of this disease. Most of the animals die of starvation in February or March, especially if there has been much snow during [476] the winter. If a family loses all its animals, everybody helps out by giving them others. The tent nomads do not often keep goats, but the sedentary Fantzu often do, and they also drink goat's milk.

Every family has at least one horse. The Mewu-Fantzu have a small breed of horses that measures about 130 centimeters at the withers. These Tibetan ponies are somewhat smaller and lighter than the Mongolian ponies or those from the provinces of Ch'inghai and Kansu. They are closer to the tarpan (Equus gmelini) than the Przewalski type (1). These horses have a great deal of endurance

1. Compare Hermanns 3), page 164 ff.

and are especially adapted for use in mountainous terrain. They 232 have hard hoofs which are not shoed in the steppes. Good stallions 435 are selected for breeding, the rest are castrated at four years. These horses live an average of 10 years; the men break them in at 3 years. The average price of a riding horse is $40 to $50; the highest price is $100. No horses are imported, but horse traders come from T'ao-chou and He-tso, and the Mewu-Fantzu sell them horses. Mules are not used by the tent nomads; asses cannot stand the high altitude.

492 The simple horse bridles of leather with brass mountings are made and sold by the Chinese, likewise the iron snaffles and the stirrups which can be of iron or brass. The Mewu-Fantzu use Hungarian saddles /bocksattel/ the wooden frames of which are made by the sedentary Tebu-Fantzu on the northern slopes of the

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Min-shan, and sold to the nomads. (2) These frames are put together 492

2. Compare Rockhill, page 716 f. Wooden frames are used as pack saddles for yaks and pien-niu. These are also customarily used in China. Cf. Rockhill, Plate 26.

by the nomads among whom there are regular saddlers. The wooden frame is /29/ put on a thick felt pad which serves as a saddle cushion and is covered with gaily patterned pulu cloth. The saddle is slightly upholstered and is covered with leather; often it is decorated with brass mountings. A person who is worried about the health of his horse ties a bundle of gaily colored silk ribbons on its mane. This must be consecrated by a lama.

Each tent has at least one or two dogs. One of them is kept on 231
a chain fastened to a stake, the other is allowed to run loose. In the winter a hole is dug for the chained dog so that he can protect himself from the cold. The dogs get to be about 80 centimeters tall and have a very shaggy coat, especially in winter, of black, yellowish brown or yellowish gray color. They are very alert and bark at the slightest provocation. Often every dog of a camp will bark for hours, especially at night, when they catch the scent of some beast of prey. It is very difficult to approach a tent because of these dogs. One always has to have hands and pockets full of stones to be able to defend oneself against them. One can approach a tent without danger 231
only when its inmates hold back the unleashed dogs. Riders like to 411
carry a stick 60 to 70 centimeters long, to which is fastened a whip of leather about 1 meter long, with an angular iron tip. When they pass or stop at a tent they twirl it about to protect their horse from the dogs. You often see horses with large scars on their hind shanks 231
from dog bites; they are, of course, particularly skittish and often become restless even when they hear a dog bark far off. The dogs are fed tsamba and whey, sometimes also meat scraps. A good watchdog costs about as much as a yak, a less desirable one, as much as a sheep. The dogs are allowed to grow old and die a natural death. A good dog skin which is preferred as a cover for the couch, costs up to $10 or more, sometimes, however, only $2. [237 435]

/30/ The only useful crop which the tent nomads plant is oats. 243
As we said above, each family sows some oats next to its relatively low lying winter dwelling. The crop is planted in the fifth Chinese month and is cut green in the ninth and tenth. It is used as fodder for the horses in winter, less often also as yak fodder. All the oat

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craft. The women know how to spin wool, but cannot weave. The only craft with which a woman can earn money is that of hairdresser. Only the men can sew, and they make all the clothing and shoes. They use Chinese cotton thread and crude needles imported from Szechuan. The only men's craft besides tailoring is saddle-making. Often, however, men earn money with their oxen as drivers of pack animals. The tents are made mostly by lamas.

Basketry is not highly developed. The large willow baskets used for gathering yak dung are sometimes made at home, but are generally imported from the neighboring sedentary Fantzu. Shallow baskets are used for storing special provisions, for example, mushrooms, and these are obtained from the Tebu-Fantzu.

The livestock of the nomads constitutes their entire wealth. They have practically no money. In livestock there are great differences between rich and poor. It often happens that a family or an entire tent community suddenly becomes impoverished, if a great many animals starve after a deep snowfall, or if many die of an epidemic. If a family loses all its animals, friends and neighbors help them out. There is very little begging. In the nomad settlements one never sees beggars; a few may be seen around the monasteries where they get a little tsamba on festive occasions or at burials.

Taxation is still very low: $0.50 to $1, according to the size of the family, must be paid annually to the tribal chief. The Chinese police collect it from him twice a year, in the second and eighth month. No monetary tax need be paid to the lamaseries, /36/ but each family must contribute food for the general temple festivals and to those temples where they have relatives among the lamas. Lamas also come to the tent camps very often to collect butter for the lamaseries, and this is always freely given.

Trade is entirely in the hands of Mohammedans and Chinese chiefly the former. There are quite a number of things that are purchased with money; farther in the interior of the grasslands there is more barter. During the first years of the Republic silver dollars came to be used in place of unminted silver (taels). Smaller units of exchange are the tsuan (?) and copper coins. A tsuan is the equivalent of 49 copper coins; 4 tsuan are 36 cents; 11 1/2 tsuan are 1 silver dollar. In 1936 there was no paper money among the Fantzu, but it will soon replace silver which is being recalled by Chinese officials.

The nomads sell the following to Mohammedans and Chinese: sheep, horses and yaks, sheep guts, horse and yak hides, horse and

439 yak tails, skins of sheep, of lambs and unborn lambs, of dogs, foxes
237 and groundhogs, more rarely skins of goats, gazelles and wolves. After New Year, for which pigs were slaughtered, they also sell pig bristles. Finally, they sell musk, field mushrooms, the chüo-ma root (Potentilla anserina) and hsiao-hsiang, a plant used in making incense candles.

439 The Chinese sell to the Fantzu: dress goods (silk and cotton), leopard skins for the men's fur coats, ornaments, weapons, kitchen utensils, especially cooking pots, needles, thread, matches, bridles with snaffle and stirrup. Tsamba is purchased from the sedentary Fantzu, often also wood. Woodenware, especially saddles, eating bowls and spoons come chiefly from the sedentary Fantzu who live in southern Kansu and northern Szechuan.

201 Bargaining is carried on very cautiously. The Tibetans do not
439 come out with the price immediately, but /37/ according to a custom also widespread in China, the two parties shake hands under their long sleeves, and the price demanded of the buyer is indicated by stretching out the fingers. They keep a dead-pan expression, so that they will not betray toward one another their real feelings about the transaction. Often such a transaction in sign language is carried on not by the two partners alone; bystanders act as go-betweens or lend support to one of the two parties, but likewise only in sign language under their sleeves.

439 The Mohammedan and Chinese traders come to the tent camps of the Mewu-Fantzu. (1) But the Fantzu also often go to the

1. For details see Ekvall 4).

Chinese settlements next to the temples on the caravan road from Ho-chou to Labrang, or to the nearest Chinese cities. An important trading station for the Mewu-Fantzu is the Chinese-Mohammedan settlement next to the large monastery of He-tso; somewhat farther away and less important is the trading station near the monastery of Ka-chia-chiu-szu; a large trading center still farther away is the one near the large temple city of Labrang. The more sizeable Chinese cities visited by the Mewu-Fantzu are the district cities of T'ao-chou (the old part of the city), Ho-chou and Ning-hou. In T'ao-chou they buy chiefly metalware, for example, copper and brass kettles. Frequently the nomads bring wood with their yaks from the sedentary Fantzu of the lower areas to Ho-chou and Ning-hou, and buy goods with the money they have thus earned. The nomads